REMARKS

Applicants and the undersigned are most grateful for the time and effort accorded the instant application by the Examiner. The Office is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejection presented in the outstanding Office Action in light of the following remarks.

Claims 1-16 were pending in the instant application at the time of the outstanding Office Action. Of these claims, Claims 1, 15, and 16 are independent claims; the remaining claims are dependent claims. Claims 1-16 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Jeffrey et al. (hereinafter "Jeffrey"). Claims 1-16 also stand rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Owens et al. (hereinafter "Owens"). Additionally, Claims 1-16 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being obvious over Allen et al. (hereinafter "Allen") in view of Westfall et al. (hereinafter "Westfall"). Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-16 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Jeffrey. As best understood, Jeffrey appears to be directed to a cell-based system for computation and communication in which the cells are structures that associate executable code and data into a basic computational model. These cells are connected to other cells via branches, and are traversed by processors that activate remote processing or data transfer in the cells. This cell structure facilitates and controls highly parallel and distribute processing, allowing self-modification of the entire system. (Abstract) Numerous different types of branches and processors exist to perform the various functions that

enable the system to work. Rules are also enforced to forward the results of the cell processes. (Column 41) The system of cells can also be divided into subnets. These subnetworks of cells can be relocated and expanded, thus enabling dynamic modification in the system. (Column 27, lines 26-54)

There is no teaching or suggestion in Jeffrey of handling interactive information exchange through networks having a plurality of client machines. There is no notion of a client machine in Jeffrey, only that of a cell. Further, there is no teaching or suggestion in Jeffrey of composing a request message offering predetermined response options, whereby corresponding response messages are returned through the network. The section cited in the Office Action referring to this limitation asserts that systems respond with messages to user-input events, such as pressing a key on a keyboard or moving a mouse. There is no other mention of response messages in Jeffrey. Although the system may act in a specified manner in response to a user input, clearly the user input does not offer predetermined response options to the system. Further, packet forwarding rules are not set up in the networks dependent on the predetermined response options, as is claimed by the instant invention. There is also no suggestion or teaching in Jeffrey to set up packet forwarding rules in the networks specifying a particular treatment for said returned packets dependent on said predetermined response options.

The cell-based system of Jeffrey stands in stark contrast to the present invention. In accordance with at least one presently preferred embodiment of the invention, a request message is composed offering predetermined response options, for which corresponding response messages are returned through the network. Forwarding rules are set up and

used to configure one or more routers that forward response packets to the server, specifying treatments for returned packets dependent upon the predetermined response options in the packets. (Page 5, lines 11-13) The configuring of the routers may include, individually or in combination, to instruct said routers to discard response messages containing predetermined response options, to forward response messages containing a certain response option to a specified host connected to one of said networks, to combine more than one response messages arriving in a given time frame and to forward the combined messages as one message, to store the selected option of said response options in conjunction with the identity of the sender or to determine the amount of received response messages for each response option. (Page 5, lines 11-20)

Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, **composing a request message offering predetermined response options, whereby corresponding response messages are returned through said networks in one or more packets**, and **setting up packet forwarding rules in said networks specifying a particular treatment for said returned packets dependent on said predetermined response options.** Similar language also appears in the other Independent Claims. It is respectfully submitted that Jeffrey clearly falls short of present invention (as defined by the independent claims) in that, *inter alia*, it does not disclose composing a request message offering predetermined response options, whereby corresponding response messages are returned through said networks in one or more packets, nor does it disclose setting up packet forwarding rules in said networks specifying a particular treatment for said returned packets dependent on said predetermined response options. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that

the applied art does not anticipate the present invention because, at the very least, "[a]nticipation requires the disclosure in a single prior art reference of each element of the claim under construction." *W.L. Gore & Associates, Inc. v. Garlock*, 721 F.2d 1540, 1554 (Fed. Cir. 1983); *see also In re Marshall*, 198 U.S.P.Q. 344, 346 (C.C.P.A. 1978).

Claims 1-16 also stand rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Owens. As best understood, Owens appears to be directed to a system for integrating voice mail, fax mail and electronic mail in a universal mailbox, so that the chosen media of the recipient of the messages may be used to access all three types of messages. Message senders and receivers may set preferences on how messages are sent and received. (Abstract) Sender's and receiver's rules are automatically applied. (Column 3, lines 40-57)

There is no teaching or suggestion in Owens of composing a request message offering predetermined response options, whereby corresponding response messages are returned through the network. Rather, as mentioned above, the options selected by the user are not in response to a message, nor does the user send a corresponding message back. There is no other mention of predetermined options in response messages in Owens.

The integrated messaging system of Owens stands in stark contrast to the present invention, as explained above. Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, **composing a request message offering predetermined response options, whereby corresponding response messages are returned through said networks in one or more packets**. Similar language also

appears in the other Independent Claims. It is respectfully submitted that Owens clearly falls short of present invention (as defined by the independent claims) in that, *inter alia*, it does not disclose composing a request message offering predetermined response options, whereby corresponding response messages are returned through said networks in one or more packets. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the applied art does not anticipate the present invention because, at the very least, "[a]nticipation requires the disclosure in a single prior art reference of each element of the claim under construction." *W.L. Gore & Associates, Inc. v. Garlock*, 721 F.2d 1540, 1554 (Fed. Cir. 1983); *see also In re Marshall*, 198 U.S.P.Q. 344, 346 (C.C.P.A. 1978).

Additionally, Claims 1-16 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being obvious over Allen in view of Westfall. As best understood, Allen is directed towards an apparatus for intercepting and forwarding incorrectly addressed postal mail for the United States Postal Service. (Abstract) An apparatus, that functions in either an automated or semi-automated mode, reads the name and destination marking address and compares them to a list of names in the USPS National Change of Address database to determine if the mail has an incorrect address listed with the addressee. The apparatus then prints and the correct address in place of the incorrect address on the piece of mail, enabling it to be delivered to the addressee.

There is no suggestion or teaching in Allen of interactive information exchange through networks having a plurality of clients. An apparatus that is able to connect to a United States Postal Service database does not constitute a network with a plurality of client machines. Further, the delivery of mail to persons living in the United States by the

United States Postal Service does not constitute "handling interactive information exchange through networks having a plurality of client machines". The present invention constitutes information exchange through computer networks. Allen deals with handling postal mail address corrections. There is no suggestion or teaching in Allen of meeting any of the other limitations of the instant invention, specifically those in the independent claims. The limitations of the instant invention deal with inter-computer information exchange, and it has been clearly shown that Allen does not deal with such a type of information exchange.

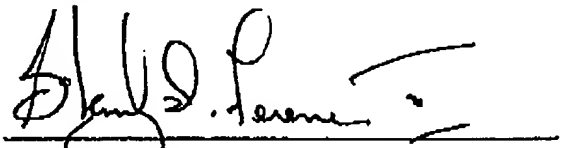
Westfall does not overcome the deficiencies of Allen as shown above. However, whether or not Westfall meets the limitations of the claimed invention is irrelevant, because the combination of Westfall and Allen is improper. Allen and Westfall are not analogous art. Allen is currently classified in Class 700, which deals with data processing: generic control systems or specific applications, whereas Westfall is classified in Class 709, which deals with electrical computers and digital processing systems: multicomputer data processing. The class/subclasses of Allen and Westfall have no relation (for example, the class/subclass 700/219 of Allen is related to class 28, subclasses 464 through 468, class 131 subclass 327, and so forth). In addition to being classified in completely different and unrelated class/subclasses, Allen and Westfall could not technically be combined to function as the claimed present invention. The main usage of computers in Allen is to read mailpieces and determine the validity of the address, allowing for manual human interaction with the system. However, as best understood, Westfall is directed towards services on a computer network such as video

calls, web services, and so forth. Westfall tries to control the connection quality between sites in a communication network to maintain quality of service, without manual intervention. Thus, although Westfall and Allen do not combine to meet the present invention, even the suggestion of their combination is impractical because technically one of ordinary skill in the art would not be able to combine both inventions.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1, 15, and 16 fully distinguish over the applied art and are thus allowable. By virtue of dependence from Claim 1, it is thus also submitted that Claims 2-14 are also allowable at this juncture.

In summary, it is respectfully submitted that the instant application, including Claims 1-16, is presently in condition for allowance. Notice to the effect is hereby earnestly solicited. If there are any further issues in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



Stanley D. Ference III
Registration No. 33,879

Customer No. 35195
FERENCE & ASSOCIATES
409 Broad Street
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15143
(412) 741-8400
(412) 741-9292 - Facsimile

Attorneys for Applicants